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attempts to defraud the bank. They met with a flattering reception. Orders had been forwarded to the custom-house to admit the machinery free of duty. Upon their arrival in London, social hospitalities were extended to them, and their establishment was visited by throngs, from the royal Duke to the humble artisan, including the Lord Mayor, the Governor and Directors of the bank, and members of the various scientific societies. For a time it was one of the lions of the metropolis, and such was the favorable opinion expressed by all, that scarcely a doubt was entertained of this enterprise; and as their own artists had not presented any specimens worthy of notice, the bank, after a year's hesitation, decided upon withdrawing from circulation all notes under £5, and continuing the use of the old plates for other denominations, relying for security against the counterfeiter, upon the *paper maker* and *hangman*, instead of the *engraver*. This decision was not formally communicated to Messrs. Perkins and Fairman, and they were kept in a state of uncertainty until their *patience* and *funds* were alike exhausted, when presuming that they were not to be successful in the first great object of their enterprise, they began to turn their attention to other quarters, and the result has been a business more extensive and profitable, than if it had been exclusively confined to the Bank of England. The establishment then created, is still continued under the direction of members of Mr. Perkins's family; and at this time it furnishes the entire paper currency of the United Kingdom and most of its colonies, with the exception of that of the Banks of England and Ireland. It also enjoys the patronage of the government, supplying the excise and post-office stamps—and strange as it may appear, without exciting rivalry.

After more than a year's absence, Messrs. Fairman and Spencer returned to the United States; upon their arrival they learned of the death of Murray and the insolvency of the company, caused mainly by his (Murray's) injudicious and extravagant speculations in real estate. A reorganization of the firm, including Underwood and Spencer, and more highly-finished engravings from the burin of Fairman, and machine work by Spencer, soon increased their already high reputation; great as this was, however, others were not deterred from entering the field, and from that period to the present time, there has been a continued and rapid improvement in every department of these paper mints, each of the companies bringing to their aid the best artists and most ingenious mechanics of the country, fostering and developing talent by liberal rewards, until a currency is furnished, which is well calculated to diffuse throughout the community a refined taste, and a love for the beautiful in Art. Among the names of the artists and mechanics to whom we are mainly indebted for this result, we would mention the names of A. B. Durand and J. W. Casilear, the eminent landscape painters; Henry Inman, Darley, Armstrong, Danforth, Jones and Cashman; to the mechanical department, Spencer, C. Durand, and others.

The various establishments holding high

positions in the Art department of bank note engraving, have, each of them, a *stock* of dies, consisting of exquisitely engraved vignettes, portraits, and other ornaments, and engine turnings of the most elaborate character. They are conducted by men in every way qualified for their very responsible stations—and there are few involving higher responsibilities. It now only remains for the banks to do their duty, by withdrawing all soiled notes from circulation; and we shall then have a currency of which we may be justly proud, and which the most ultra Bentonites would regard with complacency.

THE ART OF THE USE OF COLOR IN IMITATION IN PAINTING.

NO. II.

BY WILLIAM PAGE.

There are, as we have before stated, only three primitive colors in Nature or Art, and when any of these, or the compounds made from them, are brought into contact by being placed near or against each other, it is found that their apparent brilliancy is increased, or set off by the contrast, &c. As for instance, red, when seen by the side of green, appears more red by the contact—green being the other two primitives combined into one color. In like manner, yellow is affected by purple, and blue by orange; so that for simple contrast, we have but to take one primitive color, no matter which, and combine the other two, to make an opposition to the first, such as all times and nations have accepted as agreeable to the eye; whereas, any two of the primitive colors, brought directly together, produces a discord, often very harsh and disagreeable in itself, but when skillfully used by the artist, becoming a great power in his hands, to drive together into a more intimate harmony the less discordant colors used. These primitives, when all mixed together, produce brown. This is the universal color of Nature, and the great harmonizer of those old masters, who understood colors the best, and which brown many moderns have observed as making up the greater proportion of the tone of the pictures of the best colorists, and the want of which, in modern schools, as I shall show, is but another proof of that deficiency of knowledge of colors in this day that I have more than hinted at. This brown color, as I said, being composed of red, yellow, and blue, is capable of infinite variations, as it may pass from reddish-brown to blackish-brown, or yellowish-brown, at the will of the painter; so that if he desires to make a red more powerful by the opposition to it of his ground or surrounding color, he has but to make it (the ground) tend in its hue towards greenish-brown; or if he would merge it in, or harmonize it with the surrounding ground color, he makes the aforesaid ground of a reddish-brown; for these two opposite principles of harmony and contrast comprehend all that this external application of color can do. For when the painter would make any one of the primitive colors more striking to the eye, he surrounds it with a compound mostly composed of the other two, thereby forming the greatest opposition; and when he would harmonize or soften its effect to the eye, he uses least of these opposites. A few experiments made on white paper in water colors, with red, yellow and blue, will soon enable any artist to thread all the intricacies of the whole scale of color, and their possible oppositions and harmonies, as matter of mere contrast and harmony of external color. This, and what grows immediately out of this, is all the superficial knowledge of what is called the present English School of Painting, of which we Americans have taken to

ourselves more than can do us good, unless we learn better where to bestow it, in its proper place, subject to higher laws, the laws of the imitation, or the reproduction of Nature's works. It is so notorious as to cause comment to be made the world over, wherever there are to be found modern, and *good old* pictures, that the new are light, or white and feeble, or glaring in color, when compared with the old, or even good copies from them. The Royal Academy Exhibitions strike all observers in this, whether they be Englishmen or Americans, as being an assemblage of bright colors and whitewash, having no type anywhere in Nature, but only like *itself*, or other modern exhibitions of pictures, whether on the continent of Europe or here in America, ever the same crude, feeble, grey, garish, unharmonized patches of gaudy colors and staring whiteness. Whereas, the better works of the old painters, particularly those who can lay claim to any knowledge of color, are uniformly found to be low in tone, rich, brown and harmonious, the flesh (the best of color in Art) in that medium between light and dark, where only the greatest amount of color can be found, so that the flesh in Titian's pictures, according to the best critics, is perhaps the lowest in its local color ever painted. This has been variously accounted for by different writers, as owing to the age of the pictures, time being supposed to have sunken them to their present low scale, &c., &c., all of which is insufficient to explain satisfactorily the fact, as there are even old pictures of Titian's time, or earlier, as light and crude as any modern English or French, when if time would have done this thing for one, it would, being no respecter of persons, have done it for all. But there can be given a clear and satisfactory solution of this problem, that shall show to common sense that instead of its having been time or accident that has made pictures which were originally bad or indifferent, good, the painters who produced them really knew the Art which they professed and practiced, more thoroughly than those who pretend to this knowledge in these days. Indeed, the old painters had only nature to study, from which they drew deep truths and principles, such as could be safely trusted to, and did universally produce results that moderns look upon as the offspring of a happier genius than we are blessed with, though it was the inevitable consequence of energetic minds, devoted to the analysis of those principles which alone can form a solid basis for true Art, and be learned from Nature, our true school-mistress.

Thus much of color as we had treated in this article, before we made this digression, a child of twelve years of age may learn in a few months of teaching; and this has been spun out by various authors, into more volumes than would be necessary to tell of the whole rise and fall of empires as well as Arts, yet this is all that modern Art has learned from the wonderful works of earlier painters, together with what science has done for us, and the increase of knowledge.

In that medium degree, equally removed from the extremes of light and dark, which we mentioned in our first article, occur in nature all the most powerful colors, and nowhere else, for more light must weaken, or more dark must obscure them. Hence the necessity that that most difficult of subjects to be imitated, human flesh, should be placed so low in the scale of light, as to allow all the purest color to pass through its plane, or the range of light which it occupies in the picture. This, any man may see the truth of, who has endeavored conscientiously to copy nature, or even looked attentively at such copy, when it is made. We now see a good reason why good old pictures are low in tone, not dark, or black, as too many of the specimens that reach our shores are, for if their lowness of tone is truly attained, it is so decep-

tive as to seem to reflect more light, than the lightest picture gives out. Such modern pictures as are an approach in lowness of tone to either nature or the works of true colorists, are liable to be what is termed *leathery*, and grow more and more so with every year after being painted; whereas the old have almost the tenderness of nature, which tenderness is the very opposite of the "leathery quality;" this latter quality increases by the darkening of the surface of the color, and is often increased by the changing of the oils. It is so common in the English pictures, where there is an attempt to paint on a low key, that all kinds of vehicles are supposed to be better, as they seem to promise to overcome this difficulty, which they attribute to the use of Megilps, &c., &c. But it has a deeper origin. The truth is, that whenever colors are used, no matter how pure they be, in a picture, their tendency will be to change darker on the surface, thereby becoming leathery, for this is the inevitable quality of darker, and particularly the warmer colored browns, passed over lighter and left so. Now the opposite quality of the leathery is always produced by passing a lighter opaque color over a darker one. This, when well known and well applied, will enable any one to rid his pictures of this quality, though the flesh be as low as that of Titian, and without which I believe that even he would have worked in vain to produce any approach to nature, such as he has made, this being the way of nature herself, and therefore the best. Now as human flesh occurs in this medium degree between light and dark, which, we have mentioned, is composed of the three primitive colors, in such subtle arrangement as to baffle all attempts of mere eye and hand in monkey imitation, to render them intelligibly, and must yet be given before anything can be done worthy of our opportunities, and what has been accomplished by others in less intelligent times, let us try to follow the light which nature presents in the investigation of her works, and the analysis of her principles. For we cannot, by studying the pictures of the old masters, as we can in nature, separate the layers of color used in their progress, nor learn the mode of their production, now when the hands that executed, and the minds that produced them, have gone beyond the reach of our questioning, and left us nothing but the results of their labors, from which we barely learn that they alone, of all the professed disciples of Art, have understood the *language* even, in which Art must speak or remain tongue-tied, or at the best lisp, like a little child, but more like an aged man, that has reached his second childishness, and fills up the hour with his empty babble. But, I doubt not that we shall be able to show that there is yet a way to attain to what now makes them "the Divine in Art;" so conspicuous above us; and that by the simplest means, such as could not but have been suggested to reasoning minds, of sufficient self-dependence to throw aside all, that they had not themselves tested, as worthless, beginning anew in the true school of nature, as children who have the *whole* Art to learn, and not taking for granted anything but the deductions of their own reason or experience. Now, I propose to give the sketch of a process whereby a head may be painted, and though from the complicated nature of words, and particularly when used by one who has had other things than words to study, as in my case, I cannot hope to make it simple to the simple, though, if it be well thought over, and applied with tolerable skill, will prove its truth in the success—at least showing its capacity for the grandest results. At all events, let no man condemn it until he can see a flaw in the reasoning, or has tested its truth or falseness, by an actual experiment—when, if he cannot produce a better picture by it, I fear not to declare that he cannot produce a good one at all.

LETTERS FROM ITALY.—No. II.

FLORENCE, July 1, 1854.

DEAR PAULINA—It is by an effort that I still continue to make Art the only theme of my communication to you; although I am conscious of no nobler speciality, none which has its universality. I love its eternal patience. I perceive the sublimity of its mission. All through the night of the soul, down into its abysmal depths, gaze the great silent ones, until the day breaking. The gods themselves bend tenderly over little children, and reveal to them the mysteries of the constellations, the truths and harmonies of the heavens.

There is no one word by which to designate that which Art teaches—Winckelman to the contrary notwithstanding—who writes Beauty, as its object—nor Truth alone, as the Oxford student affirms; but this—the *Truth there is in Beauty, and the Beauty there is in Truth*. There is in the True that which is not beautiful, wherewith Art has nothing to do, there is not in the Beautiful that which is false. Yet there is a signification, a truth within a truth, which external is Beauty, the type, the visible sign of the unseen divinity, the flame marking the place where God is; and with this exterior sign of truth, as a sign, as a type and symbol, Art has ever to deal, and wherever any human being has dared to use it for other purposes, its life has ascended, leaving the man blind and insane to wander among the tombs!

Still, the natural tenderness of these skies, the loving kindness of this earth, wooing the weary ones to restful fellowship, the vineyards, the broadcast flowers (a procession marched silently over a carpet of flowers spread upon our streets, yesterday), all these tempt me to tell their story, they lull me to dream, alas! to sleep.

The winds blow upon me; I feel that they have passed over Lotus-fields, "to live," to breathe, to quaff the blissful flood as it pours upon our lips from the o'erfilled goblets of lilies; to hear the laughter of streams and fountains, to listen to bells, and the remote organ, is enough. Why toil? Why think? Of what avail is fame, or gold, or marbles, or Heaven? Oh, for a never-ending twilight, with something of sunset, something of stars, and this same marvelous wind!

When the time for rest comes, I will yield to these influences; then give you the record of feeling instead of thought; now, I will *not* yield.

Tuscan apathy warns me of the danger; that strong men have been conquered by the south wind which has come up over the sea from Africa, like Egypt's voluptuous Queen. The unutterably beautiful life must be dissolved and lost in the soul, else the soul shall be dissolved and lost in that.

Perhaps no better use can be made of this twilight-time, than to look back upon the morning. Night reveals the day, and when the days of Art have departed, then is the time to remember the processional dawn, to contemplate the lives of those who rang the matin bells, and said the early prayers.

Philosophies and experiences of youth are too often disregarded, notwithstanding that therein is contained the secret of salvation. The seeds of dissolution are sown in the spring. Let us learn to distinguish the seed, now that we harvest the fruits; for I am one of those who believe in the immortality of Art, and who can look forward with fond faith to another spring.

My thoughts dwell, especially this morning, upon the earliest outbreaks of Christian Art; driven thence by a somewhat deeper realization of its present shrouded inactivity, a little spasmodic vibration, or a sigh, only indicating vitality, and assuring us that we may not mourn for the dead; and also drawn thence, by the unrivalled beauty of much that has come down to us from those remote ages.

The "beauty of holiness" was the highest

ideal of *that* school, it might be said the *only* ideal, in all else they failed; but those throngs of the pure in heart, of those blessed ones, those hosts of angels in whose eyes we behold the immeasurable rapture of heavenly life, are beyond description.

Never before, never since, has the human fall been so purged from the expression of evil, from the consciousness of sin.

The pencil is more faithful than the Artist knows. The devils of Fra Angelico are good men with wide mouths and Harlequin's tailed and hooped costume; the angels of Rubens are Harlots; and in those two facts, are contained the only truths the nineteenth century Artist should seek for in Pre-Raphaelitism.

Pre-Raphaelitism? By that term, I mean, that co-operative alliance between religion and Art originated and ratified by Cimabue, and broken by Raphael, subsisting through a period of years, upon which I look back with inexpressible reverence.

I am no Catholic, I subscribe to no rule of church framed on the hither verge of some dark century, like Noah's ark shaped and fitted for the flood; but I believe in that all-pervading religion found wherever there is a human heart; known by its perfect fellowship with God's world, his firmament, his light, the colors with which his angels ornament the earth, the marvelous melodies his hands fashioned the throats of birds to sing; known by its power to bring us into relationship with the fragrant truths of violets, and far-off loves of the Pleiades, which demands not of the toiling Iceland, or the captive Ethiopean, that he should construe Greek and Hebrew, but loves little children and childlike men; in this I believe, and in whatsoever point Art has united with, wrought with, and from, this divinely human principle, Art has been glorious, and has achieved the immortal.

Precisely when the full liberty out into which this living principle drew and urged the artist ceases, and the lines flow from a consciousness of the requirements of Catholicism, of Protestantism, or of any other artificial organization, religious or social; *then* Art violates the law of its own life, and the subsequent splendor is but the "lying in state" of departed royalty.

The faces of human beings in the pictures of the Pre-Raphaelites, are lovelier and more beautiful than any other embodied conception; the surroundings and accessories are never base, but feeble and unworthy; always excepting those poets over which conventionalists had no control, that is, clusters of flowers and bits of atmospheric sky; these the church had not petrified, neither had they the papal seal.

The intimate relation established between Art and the soul of the artist, ere he had learned that a lesser part of his nature might usurp the place of the spiritual power, revealed a remarkable law in the art of expression; *the artist could not utter a falsehood*.

Wherever by reason of human weakness, as befell Andrea del Castagno, and Lippi, one wandered from the highway, however sanctimonious his manner, however holy the words of his lips, day by day, that marvelous pencil went on in the solitude of his studio, recording all the subtle changes in his sin, his temptation, his yielding, and his hellish unrest; in a language to the clearness and adequacy of which, this of words is confusion itself, until a life's history was given to the world.

It seems strange to me, the philosophy of that history of Castagno, now that I sit with records before me; page after page, written by his own hand. One day, I stood before a Magdalen in Pitti Palace gallery—ah, my God, woman, you *have* sinned! Here was no affection of sorrow, for some genteel error, wept over by a maiden with rosy lips and cheeks, beautiful bosom half concealed by an abundance of envious hair, and liquid, upturned eyes; but a woman who had committed a *crime*, who